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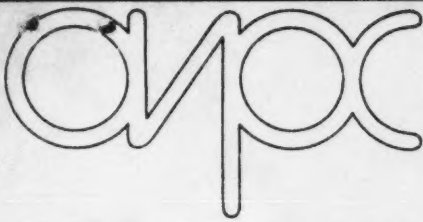
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ABSTRACT

Four papers from a 1981 conference in England on the management of quality in further education are presented. In "The Management of Quality," Tim Brighouse discusses quantitative versus qualitative measurement of quality in further education advisory input, self-evaluation, leadership, and inservice education. In "Staff Development," Harold Farnsworth considers the need for staff appraisal, the relationship between employer requirements and employee expectations, possible objectives of staff development, methods of staff development, and the evaluation of quality. A sample form for evaluating staff and suggestions for conducting interviews are included. In "Maintaining Quality--A Union View," Janey Rees suggests that further education is more accountable than most sectors of education, partly through its involvement with industry and commerce and the professional bodies. In addition, the public sector has a higher proportion of adults as students, who are more likely to express dissatisfaction. Professional training for further education teachers is also addressed. In "Mechanisms of Quality and the New FE," Alan Gibson examines staff development, keeping the college under review, and new directions for further education. He suggests that staff development or self-evaluation are contingent on knowing what is being done to serve student clientele. The massive changes in the industrial world are generating new students in further education, many of whom have lower IQs than past further education students. It is important that further education teachers be able to use experience as a basis for learning, and teaching will need to become more interactive. (SW)

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The Association of Vice-Principals of Colleges

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THE MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY
IN FURTHER EDUCATION

A REPORT ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
AVPC AUTUMN GENERAL MEETING
20 NOVEMBER 1981

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THE MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY IN FURTHER EDUCATION

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The Management of Quality by Tim Brighouse

Most of us were brought up in the 1950s and 1960s when quality was measured by the quantity of needs met - a product of a system that measured itself by building the system - how many more schools built, the size of the Teacher-Pupil ratio, the number of courses introduced, the number of additional 16-19 year students, etc. We spent our time as system builders rather than measuring too closely the quality in the system.

Today the danger is that we measure quality by the cost of Input and not by the quality of what is being done in that provision or in the Output of the system - that we measure how well we are doing by how cost effective we are becoming. We begin to measure achievement by the number of schools closed, by teachers lost, etc. Some in authority may find this approach as a measurable task - we need to get away from that approach.

Unfortunately many things militate against us changing our approach. For example the Burnham Report is aimed at a quantitative measure, not qualitative; the greater ability taught, the greater the reward. We need to break out of measuring quality in this way. It is worrying that at the secondary stage we have inherited a system with its roots set 100 years ago designed to cater for the top 10%. Perhaps a wrong turning was the expansion after the Second World War of Colleges of Further Education, for if they had not expanded and the chance was taken to think out the needs of the 11-19 age group there would have been much greater impact on the curriculum than just the 16-19s, with much more on offer post-16 in the schools than academic study, causing a significant backwash into the curriculum pre-16.

At this time one of the great difficulties is that of maintaining morale in the face of falling rolls (which has yet to reach FE). We have learnt the lesson slowly of how you meet numerical contraction and endeavour to get the "system" right in terms of cost effectiveness without worrying about quality aspects. And although FE is as yet unaffected by numbers contracting, there will need to be redeployment of effort as the result of technological change. FE is, however, more fortunate than the schools in having the freedom to respond.

For anyone with any sensitivity, there is no fun in winding down the system. In these circumstances how can we concentrate on quality?

The analogy of expansion is building a wall, whereby adding an extra layer of bricks will not affect the structure. But contraction is like dipping a cup in a bucket of water and throwing it out, which affects everyone. It is important therefore to have a keen sense of priorities which for me is primary, secondary, FE, nursery and adult education on the basis that education is comparable to a pyramid - get the foundations right and the rest will follow. It is suggested that 60% of educational development is determined by the age of 6 years.

The basis of education is the curriculum which meets the information needs, attitudes and skills of young people against a backcloth of subjects and courses. As senior managers you must identify the information, skills and attitudinal needs of your students and ask whether they are being met, what contribution is made by courses, what contribution by College life. Such qualitative features do not come about by accident but by a process of careful debate and analysis within the Institution.

It is clear that the skill needs of 11-18s are changing rapidly for what they will need in adult life. This does not refer to the basic skills of literacy and numeracy or even of manipulative and technical skills (although they are beginning to change) but the skills of communication, personal relationships, handling scarce resources in a world where people will spend decreasingly less time in paid work and where society will need something more subtle than the work ethic.

Vehicles for Managing Quality

- 1) Process of Self-evaluation. In Oxford we are tackling this in the school system over a long period. The process involves the self-evaluation of the institution as a whole. A College equivalent of self-evaluation is required which is more difficult as Colleges are amalgamations of separate departments without much inter-relationship.

Firstly, a College will need to examine itself. To avoid being too descriptive and more evaluative it needs to set out its Aims and Objectives of what it is doing and to produce evidence to see that it is meeting those objectives. (It must avoid the trap of congratulating itself on how well it does it and instead examine how it actually performs its task and consider other examples of how it might do it.)

Secondly, decide three or four areas that the College thinks it does well and consider how it can sustain these at a higher level, by reinvigorating the things going well and find strategies to keep them going. The emphasis is not on those things which are going badly, but those things which can be improved.

Thirdly, consider management by time, and those issues which are neglected.

Fourthly, decide how to use time more effectively.

- 2) Leadership. Identify how a College can affect its leadership by examining different styles. What is it about some people that things happen, with others - nothing. Vice Principals can have an impact on leadership by:
 - a) role played in appointment - to determine whether you achieve what you want in your selection procedures.
 - b) by control of institutional arrangements VPs have the power to alter what actually goes on.
- 3) Advisory Input. This quality input in FE is not high in most Authorities as FE is too diverse for an Authority to want to move it in a particular way. An Adviser is not an effective mechanism for this so that the responsibility lies with the College itself to find out what is going on.
- 4) In-Service Education. This input is vital and must be relevant, the more locally based the better. Groups in a locality should be brought together. Colleges should have increased entitlement to Full-Time secondments.

/5) Discipline ...

- 5) Discipline. This represents the end of the line for managing quality and indicates that we too have failed. We selected them and used them in our Colleges but our skills of leadership have let them down.

But having got to this stage with a poor Lecturer, you need a code or agreement clearly recognised which needs to start at HOD and Principal level with back up from the LEA. It is no use starting dismissal proceedings unless everyone in the chain knows the procedures, otherwise the exercise falls flat on its face. These are long processes which stress people's rights, which need firmness of will and unity of action to bring it to a proper conclusion. This approach has succeeded in Oxfordshire with 35 teachers leaving without the Tribunal procedure ever needing to be invoked. It is wrong for people to take up positions, whether Education Officers, Teachers or even Councillors, when the real needs are those of the students.

Staff Development by Harold Farnsworth

The main problem that we face in FE is the need for change and flexibility - to determine whether we, as managers, lead or follow. Yet at a time of rapid technological change we have a static staff. New products occur with frightening speed which affect not only technological change but also methods of use and the organisation of firms. Within Colleges we must think of the end product in terms of human happiness and better prepared students, not just administrative efficiency. The need for a formal staff development policy then is increasingly apparent.

A) The need for staff appraisal

To evaluate lecturing techniques and provide for updating of knowledge, to give a wider perspective for career development to enhance the public image and ethos of the College.

For example, a subject specialist entering FE (probably from the lower level in industry) must see himself not just as an Engineer, Chef or Accountant but as a Teacher of his subject, and therefore prepared to be an educationalist in the wider sense and master the techniques with an awareness of performance.

The College has a responsibility to help staff (and thereby students and Industry).

Staff appraisal implies:

- 1) defining REQUIRED performance
- 2) measuring ACTUAL against REQUIRED performance
- 3) giving reasons for SHORTFALL or DEVIATION
- 4) CHANGING DEVELOPING OR CORRECTION to meet REQUIREMENTS.

A College therefore needs an effective STAFFING POLICY which implies a consideration of:

- 1) Recruitment and Selection
- 2) Training and Development
- 3) Retention of staff (how keep and enthuse good staff)
- 4) Promotion (what criteria)
- 5) Future Needs Assessment.

B. Staff Development

has been defined as a "process which encourages and assists every member of staff to achieve job satisfaction while fulfilling College objectives and student needs".

It implies a balance sheet between Employer Requirements and Employee Expectations.

Requirements of Employer

Knowledge
Qualifications
Experience
Skill
Energy
Capacity
Intelligence

Basic
Needs

Social
Needs

Expectations of Employee

(Money
(Fringe benefit
(Security
(Good conditions
(Social Satisfaction
(Welfare
(Participation

Requirements of EmployerExpectations of Employee

Initiative	Ego Needs	(Prospects
Leadership		(Challenge
Potential		(Excitement
Stability		(Prestige
Continuity		(Personal fulfilment
Confidence		
Loyalty		= JOB SATISFACTION

The weighting varies for different staff (seniority etc).

C. Possible Aims of Staff Development

- 1) To improve current performance and remedy existing weaknesses
- 2) To prepare staff for changing duties and responsibilities
- 3) To encourage staff to adopt new ideas and methods when required
- 4) To provide opportunities for staff to update subject and educational knowledge
- 5) To prepare staff for advancement and wider responsibilities
- 6) To enhance Job Satisfaction.

Having formulated Aims, how are they to be achieved? How are they to avoid feedback of disillusionment?

There is no doubt that the pressure is on management in Colleges. Management today is not simply administration, not a code of standardised procedures but a creative process involving the managing of institutions and the motivation of people. Moreover, Colleges are now seen as industries, selling their products to Industry, not just offering courses, subject to the same general legislation, enduring the same problems of asset stripping mergers, trade unions etc. We must recognise the hard facts of life, that people will reach their ceiling, that some will need to retire early.

Perhaps we need to go back to first principles, to look at the basic philosophy, aims and structures (cf Von Clausewitz - "In War, all things are simple, but even simple things are difficult").

A military approach might be useful:-

MILITARY REQUIREMENTSCOLLEGE REQUIREMENTS

Qualities - Courage
Self Reliance
Presence of Mind
Energy
Resolution
Character
Firmness

?

Morale Avoidance of FRICTION

Planning Strategy
Tactics

Method Need
Habit (drill)
Coercion
Propaganda

If the appraisal is to work it must be constructive, frank and seen to be helpful.

D. Methods of Staff Development

Development takes place in many ways:-

- Induction Courses
- Initial Professional Training
- Updating Subject Knowledge
- Training in Management and Organisation
- In-Service Training for special needs
- Secondment to other employment
- Team Teaching
- Attendance at Courses, Conferences and Meetings
- Research
- Consultancy
- Supervision of new staff
- Service on College Committees and Working Parties
- Job Movement and Rotation
- Responsibilities such as Course Tutor
- Joint appraisals
- Service on Examining Boards
- Study Leave and Study Tours

What facilities exist within the College for staff development?
What priorities? Staff Development must be a managerial responsibility from the Principal downwards with the Staff Development Officer as a catalyst, but there is also a personal obligation on each member of staff to be aware of staff development needs.

E. Staff Development Procedure

A staff development system requires:-

- 1) Diagnosis (Appraisal)
- 2) Support
- 3) Information and Communication
- 4) Records
- 5) Co-ordination.

The Brighton Technical College Pilot Scheme revolves around a personal interview with the HOD which is recorded on the form headed "Staff Development Information". The member of staff completes Sections 1-6; HOD and the member of staff have an informal private discussion which is noted in Sections 7 and 8. A copy goes to the Principal and the SDO for follow up. Advice is given on the conduct of the interview (see below).

F. Yardsticks for Improvement of Quality

Examination results, attendance rates, enthusiasm of staff and students all give a guide to performance, although we might seek more feedback from students than we do. Are the channels of communication clear? How positive a role has the Course Tutor got - or is it just a matter of pedagogical tidiness, a "place for every student, and every student in his place"?

Do all staff know the answers to the following questions:-

- What am I expected to do?
- To what standard?
- With what resources?

What authority do I have?
How will the work be judged?
What help is available?
What part do I play in my evaluation?
What management channels are available?

The Lecturer should be clearly aware of the range of his duties:-

Lecturing and Classwork
Tutoring - Academic and Personal
College Service - committees, working parties etc
Administration
Industrial Liaison and School Liaison
Consultancy and Research
Examination work
Extra-curricular activities (staff and student)
Careers and counselling
Curriculum development.

What is staff involvement in all these? Is the College a happy place?
Are ideas forthcoming? Can new developments be accepted readily?
Is there confidence in the College?

G. THOUGHTS FOR THE FUTURE

Inevitably quality assessment is very subjective. Do we need to consider more formal arrangements for teaching staff?

Job descriptions
Annual appraisal
Formal Staff Development Programmes
Limited tenure?

Does the College organisation need re-thinking? Are new requirements readily accepted, eg extended College year, teaching on industrial premises, twilight or weekend courses?

Are relationships (and the balance of power) satisfactory? Do we delegate enough?

Finally, do we have a College philosophy?

STAFF DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION

Academic Year:

Name :

Dept:

Post:

Qualifications:

Date of birth:

1. Teaching Responsibilities (Courses & subjects taught)
2. Administrative Duties (Course tutorships, staff supervision, counselling etc)
3. External responsibilities: educational and civic. (Exam memberships. Liaison work, School Governor etc)
4. Development Work (Courses/Conferences attended, research, etc)

5. Personal Comments (Degree of work satisfaction, areas of success or difficulty, desired areas of work)

6. In-service Training (Suggestions for external or internal courses desired)

7. Head of Department's Comments

Signature:

8. Lecturer's Comments (if any)

Date:

Signature:

APPRAISAL INTERVIEW:

SUGGESTED NOTES FOR CONDUCTING INTERVIEWS

PRE-INTERVIEW

- 1 Staff complete form SD3 (Staff Development Information). Apart from basic information items 1-6 should be filled up. Form should be sent to Head of Department x days pre-interview. Information requested should cover the current year and where appropriate the previous academic year.
- 2 Head of Department has personal file available and should refresh himself with details of career of staff member. Knowledge of personal circumstances is clearly an advantage but may touch upon sensitive areas.

INTERVIEW

- 1 This should be as informal as possible. If the desk barrier can be avoided this helps, especially if two easy chairs are available. In short, the interview is a purposeful but relaxed chat.
- 2 Although the form provides a good deal of data for the discussion Heads of Departments have considerable personal knowledge of some of their staff and this doubtless will influence questioning.

QUESTIONS RELATED TO THE FORM

- 1 Teaching - details relate to current timetable. Possibly explore any changes from last year. Discuss rewards and difficulties of various classes/courses. Look at the problems associated with work, eg physical conditions, college facilities etc.
- 2 Admin Responsibilities - current tasks. Consider enjoyment of admin work and teaching. More/less desired. Discuss attitude to admin work. Arising from data pose questions re roles in say Counselling, Course Co-ordinator, Course Tutor, responsibility for other staff etc. What do individuals see as their responsibilities? Do they know what to do and how to do it? Under this heading comes internal college responsibilities such as Safety Representative, member of college committees. Do they know what is expected of them?
- 3 External Responsibilities (Educational and other) - Although educational suggests a limited response, a broad view could be taken if responsibilities did complement college work, eg School Governor, NATFHE rep, or even civic responsibility such as Mayor or JP. Staff who have a lot of external responsibilities such as those concerned with running short courses, or are visiting examiners can be asked about the problems and value of such work. Staff who are members of Institutes should be asked about the frequency with which they are able to attend meetings.
- 4 Development Work - This is all about keeping up to date and finding the stimulus that makes work rewarding. Discuss value of any courses attended. (College Report form could be useful here if it has been filled up.) What happens to material learned on courses? Passed on to students or colleagues? Consider interest in conducting college based research work. Discuss attitudes to innovation in FE, eg TEC/BEC, Link Courses, MSC, TOPS etc, and possibly explore knowledge of what is happening in Department, College and FE.

- 5 Personal Comments - Questions arise from information given. If little provided, then explore examples given on form. Discuss here career hopes and how to achieve them. Consider how lecturer evaluates his own work and his position in the Department.
- 6 In-Service Training - Item 5 in particular should stimulate this though 4 is closely related. Attitudes to course attendance might be considered, especially the sensitive issue of self-help. Some explanation of the realities of funds available might be useful. Where positive suggestions for internally run courses are made, the feasibility of these should be checked-out.
- 7 Post Interview
 - a) HODs usually prefer to complete 7 after the interview. If notes have been made during the interview this may ensure agreement when the lecturer reads the comments later.
 - b) After HOD has written his comments the lecturer adds his/hers. If HOD has written 7 after the interview, then he will have to send the form under confidential cover to the member of staff. Whatever system is used, the form is not complete until both HOD and the lecturer have signed it.
 - c) One copy of the completed form is sent to the Principal and one to the SDO. A copy will be put later on the personal file of the lecturer. One copy will be retained by the Department.

The first point which it is essential to grasp when discussing the role of teaching staff in FHE and how standards can be improved and maintained is that unique in the system of education in this country FE and HE staff in the public sector already operate under a wide variety of constraints and approvals. I am referring essentially, though not exclusively, to the systems of validation and moderation which are operated by the various validating bodies with which FHE has to deal.

The three main bodies are CNAAs, BECs and TECs, and the powers which they have are very real indeed. In the initial validation process, staff are looked at to make sure that they meet the requirements of the validators both with regard to qualifications and experience and also expertise. None of the bodies concerned is, in NATFHE's experience, at all backward in indicating areas of staff deficiency, as they see it. Indeed, both as a professional association and as a trade union, the Association has been concerned in cases where, for instance, moderator or validation reports either on named or readily identifiable members of staff have caused considerable problems. I am sure you will not need reminding of the notorious incident a few years ago when an adverse CNAAs report on a major institution clearly identified much of the blame as residing with the Director and the uproar that that report occasioned. This was the incident which occasioned the most publicity but it is by no means the only incident of its kind, though it is perhaps an extreme case.

Clearly it must be open to question whether this is the most appropriate method of dealing with what is perceived as incompetence among teachers: what cannot be denied, however, is that this process does exist and the sanctions which can be thus operated can be very powerful indeed.

Many people glibly say that it is impossible to sack teachers - it is also said that it is impossible to sack civil servants and local government officers too - and this is quite wrong, of course, in all cases.

Certainly in the case of teachers there are clear procedures which are available to the employing authority which can be activated in order to dismiss teachers deemed incompetent by the employer. In addition, there are now the early retirement provisions "in the interests of the efficient operation of the service". Some people hold the view that the procedures are in fact too complex and lengthy and are not activated sufficiently often. I find I am unable to accept this - which will, I am sure, be no surprise to you! It seems to me that great care must be taken to ensure not only that justice is done, but is seen to be so.

However, this point does lead quite naturally to a consideration of the role of FE teaching - is it a profession, with all that this implies for self-regulation - and the knock on implications of that for NATFHE.

As has been indicated earlier, the concept of 'peer review' as enshrined in validation processes is already well accepted by FE. In addition, in some Colleges, through the mechanism of the Academic Board, devolved collective machinery exists for appointments, promotions and dismissals. Now, the extent to which these structures have been developed varies widely from institution to institution and is probably more fully developed in HE rather than FE. Many Colleges have a long way to go and, I feel bound to say, in some cases the reasons why these structures have failed to develop is because of resistance from management, in the shape of LEAs and College Principals who fear that such developments would undermine their own positions.

As an Association, NATFHE has always supported the greatest degree of self-regulation by staff, accepting the problems which such self-regulation present both to staff as individuals and to NATFHE as a trade union. However, it is the Association's view that it is important and that the problems thus presented are capable of solution.

In any form of self-regulation, peer-review, or whatever one wants to call it, there is an over-riding need for professional involvement in the drawing up of competence criteria. Clearly the Inspectorate has - or ought to have - a role in this. There are difficulties about agreeing competence criteria because of the disagreements which exist within the profession - including the Inspectorate - as to what that criteria should be. This however is probably the only way in which reasonable criteria can be deduced. Although there are criticisms about the operation of the validating bodies, it is generally accepted that the method is roughly the right one.

I also happen to believe that the clients should have a role. Here again, FE is more accountable than most sectors of education, both through its involvement with industry and commerce and the professional bodies and also because the sanctions which can be applied to students who fail to attend are not as severe as they are, for instance, in the schools - though I accept of course that some sanctions are available to FE, often by means of the employer. In addition, the public sector has a higher proportion of adults as students, especially in short course and part-time provision. Experienced older students are very much more likely to express dissatisfaction with provision and to be able to make their criticism felt. Where colleges are providing full-cost and 'tailor-made' courses the feed-back is especially swift, and direct and effective!

These then are the constraints which are already, as it were, written into the system. But no-one would claim that all FE teaching is perfect and that no improvements are possible. What then can be done to improve the situation?

The first thing that must be said is that, while good teachers may be born and not made, in my judgement improvements at all levels can be achieved by relevant and appropriate training.

Far too few FE teachers receive any kind of pre-service training and not many more get effective in-service training during their early years in the service. This, which has always been a problem for FE, is likely to prove an even greater handicap at a time when radical changes are taking place in the whole area especially of 16-19 education and training.

If the number of Tertiary Colleges grows - and, given the resource situation and population trends, it is difficult to see how this cannot happen, notwithstanding the recent decision of the Secretary of State regarding Manchester's proposals - FE teachers could well be at a disadvantage when competing for jobs with teachers from the schools, because of the QT status of school teachers. If this happens, it could be particularly unfortunate for the students in the Colleges, many of whom would undoubtedly benefit from the more work-orientated ethos of FE as compared with schools, and also from the particular vocational subject skills which FE teachers bring to their job.

NATFHE policy is for professional training for all FE teachers in the long term, but this is long term, and, given resource constraints, is likely to be very long term indeed. The ACSET FE Sub-Committee is currently considering priorities in this area in order to make recommendations to the main ACSET Committee. I should like to suggest that there are two areas which are clearly of high priority:

- 1) Proper in-service training, adequately financed for those who have received no professional training of any kind and who are currently teaching
- 2) Similar training - urgently - for courses which deal with the NTI, YOP provision - sometimes called the new FE.

You will observe that I refer to 'proper in-service training adequately resourced' and I do so advisedly. Far too much of what is referred to as 'in-service training' or 'staff development' is the academic equivalent of 'sitting next to Nellie'. It is inadequately organised and, above all, inadequately resourced. We all pay lip service to it, but it is too often left to institutions and individuals to find their own way towards staff development.

If it is perceived as a priority by local government, then, even in these straightened times, LEAs must make adequate resource provision for it: if LEAs do not have the money, then Government must make it available to them, with adequate safeguards to ensure it is being spent in this area, even if LEAs find this hard to swallow.

I must acknowledge that there is resistance in some Colleges towards the new FE. This is short sighted behaviour on the part of Colleges, because the base of traditional FE has been narrowing for many years, even before the current recession, and this, coupled with demographic trends, would have caused changes in FE anyway. These have, of course, been exacerbated by the current economic situation and the rise of the MSC. If teachers do not take these changes on board, then there is a risk that FE as we understand it will become little more than a rump and, if that happened, then not only will FE teachers suffer, but the youngsters who could benefit from Further Education will also be worse off.

I am sufficiently committed to the ideals of FE to believe that it has something unique to offer, something from which our young people can benefit, and something that can be preserved. If FE is unable or unwilling to take up the challenge, there are many others who will be prepared to do so, not all of whom perhaps are ideally fitted to assume the role.

But not all opposition is just teachers wanting a quiet life or being unwilling to change. There is also the very real problem of training, and here I come back to the question of resources. Many teachers would be happy to engage in the new FE, but feel inadequate to do so. Staff development could help these teachers and if education is serious about accepting this new role, then it must also meet the bill which will be entailed.

One of the aspects of staffing to which managements of Colleges need to address themselves, and indeed Unions too, is how best to give support to staff who may be experiencing difficulties in the classroom.

In the schools some attempt has been made to deal with this with the implementation of the induction year. Many Colleges of Further Education do have induction procedures but too often these are inadequate and, in any event, difficulties of this kind, though clearly more common in the early days of teaching, are not confined to teachers in their first year. Education is bedevilled at all levels, most of all at the higher levels, by the assumption that all it is necessary for a teacher to do is demonstrate subject competence. Clearly this is important, but perhaps especially for the 16-19s, and perhaps most especially for the new FE, it is not the only important factor - perhaps, for these students, not even the most important.

The Inspectorate or Advisory Staff clearly could have an important role here, but formal procedures within the college structure would be helpful. Many Colleges of course do have such structures at an informal level, but there is wide variation from institution to institution, though a good deal of informal counselling frequently goes on. The fact that this could be considered another aspect of 'peer review' - 'peer assistance' perhaps - makes it more acceptable to professional staff.

It may be that staff appraisal schemes have a role to play here, but here I think I have to declare a prejudice. My own knowledge of such schemes comes not from teaching - where I am unaware of any formal staff appraisal schemes operating - but from experience in industry and local government and what I have heard of the civil service.

I have no doubt that the theoretical framework is admirable - what I am somewhat sceptical of is the practical application. To put my reservations at the crudest level - I appreciate the attempts to bring in safeguards, but, in the last analysis, I am dubious about the possibility of an LII being able to explain and justify that he is worse at his job than he would otherwise be because his Head of Department is inadequate!

I suspect that a more positive method of appraisal would be some kind of self-appraisal with provision for input from other members of staff as appropriate.

Mechanisms of Quality and the New FE by Alan Gibson

1) Staff Development

Quality depends a great deal on Staff Development which indicates two approaches:

- a) resources being arranged and used to get people on to courses. This however poses the dilemma between advancing professional competence and achieving academic credit. The latter is easier to obtain than the former, but the dilemma needs to be resolved
- b) in house staff development - low cost or no cost, organic institutional related training. This may be promoted by the Vice Principal through the College's internal structures - whether withdrawing people from classes for Curriculum Development or pulling colleagues together to revitalise ideas.

Some Colleges are pursuing the concept of Mentoring staff but HODs and Heads of Sections do need to go into classrooms and vice versa. We need to get a greater flow of staff into classrooms and laboratories and eliminate the attitude of the teacher feeling beleaguered when someone visits the classroom.

There is a strong link of Staff Development within Curriculum Development and most Staff Development is curriculum led (eg BEC, TEC, YOP). One device for staff development which is not used enough is student monitoring, where a team of teachers talk about the students they deal with, which helps to pick up ideas.

2) "Keeping the College Under Review" (title of ILEA pamphlet)

This is an attempt to encourage Colleges to engage in stocktaking about what they do - and in schools is one spin-off of the 1980 Education Act. The fact that we have Academic Boards, Governing Bodies, Departmental Boards, Advisory Committees etc means that we engage in a great deal of such evaluation but we can go beyond this. The Schools Council document "School Self-Evaluation" is a good starting point which can be adapted for FE.

Such evaluation is much more productive if done internally and collaboratively than if done by external means. We cannot afford to wait for an Inspection, for example, as the evaluative mechanism.

3) New Directions for FE

We cannot engage in Staff Development or Self-Evaluation unless we know what we are doing for the clientele we are expected to serve. The massive changes in the industrial world are generating new students in FE, many of whom have a measured attainment of IQ lower than past FE students (which, incidentally, does not necessarily represent a step backward). This is posing major curriculum problems - we cannot work back in a systematic way from what job they will be doing with an addition of 15% for General Studies. Even people in work will be changing dramatically and many others may well not know paid employment. The "new FE" means that youngsters will be less well motivated than in the past as they cannot see a career in front of them.

They therefore will need to be motivated on a basis foreign to FE (and on a par with many schoolteachers coping with 14/15 year olds). Yet we do not want to resort to an extended secondary school curriculum; we need to provide a strong vocational relevance and get them out to sustained work experience, to promote generic or transferable skills. The curriculum must meet their personal interests without narrowing down too far. It is important that FE teachers become proficient at using experience as a basis for learning - using group skills, for example, but this is difficult for many staff, particularly if they are used to passing on specialist skills. Teaching will have to become more interactive than staff are accustomed to, where they traditionally are regarded as the "authority". They will need to engage in less autocratic dialogue with students - and may well require help to move into that mode of thinking.

The new FE requires teaching skills across the College. This in no way undermines the importance of Non-Advanced FE techniques of teaching, coaching, inculcating skills etc but these need to be generalised and used in a new kind of way, not just to promote a single narrow specialism but able to move the young person forward to a number of possible vocational futures.

Quality in the future is not going to be related solely to questions of vocational competence. We will not just judge Quality on how well we train people for a specific trade, but how well we prepare them for change, for flexibility, for responsibility in adult life, for whatever industrial or commercial future lies ahead - even in the year 2020! How many of today's manual skills will be required then?

FE has always used vocational education as the basis for personal development. Now we have got to use vocational content as the basis for enabling young people to take stock of themselves in the world and as a basis for living and earning.

All of us need to be sensitised to aspects of futurology which can be based on known scientific fact, eg the certain disappearance of particular minerals, the rapid export of technology to Less Developed Countries. We have to begin to set the vocational futures of young people as part of a world where massive change will take place quickly, totally altering the face of FE.

The past development of Colleges has come through an FE system geared to vocational need. That banker is now being called in. As Educational Managers we shall have to take ourselves through these learning processes in order to take our staff into the new employment future.
